

parenthesis, is the datum technically used in proportioning columns; and in describing the height of specimens of the different styles, it is always spoken of as being so many "diameters." The hypæthral temple at Paestum, in Sicily, built about 550 B.C. (which you visited not long ago, and have described so nicely), is another very ancient example; as are also the great temple at Selinus and the temple of Jupiter Panhellenius at Ægina;—which is beautifully placed on a mountain, as was the case with many Grecian structures. These massive ruins may be cited as early steps from the Pelægic structures, and as the connecting link between the perfected architecture of the Greeks (seen in the Athenian temples) and the ponderous structures of Egypt.

The first buildings of the Greeks were poor works; the earliest temples were probably of wood. To wooden constructions, the majority of accredited writers on the subject ascribe the origin of Greek architecture. Trunks of trees fixed in the earth, with a tile to stand on, and a tile at the top to receive the beams forming the roof, originated, say they, stone columns with cap and base. You have here a drawing

as the "Grecian honeysuckle." The accompanying sketches (Fig. 16) of a Greek "honey-

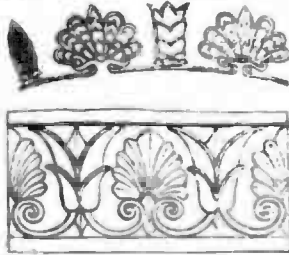


FIG. 16.

suckle," and of an ornament very general on the Assyrian marbles, will substantiate this remark.

One main argument against the hut-theory of Grecian architecture would seem to be this: that while it might be supposed, that if imitated from wooden erections, the older temples would be lighter and more like the origin than those of later time, the fact is found to be directly the reverse; the earlier structures being more massive and less post-like than those which followed. Admitting, however, that the Greeks did obtain their first models from other countries, they so sublimated and refined their models as to become entitled to all the praise due to originality. They produced an architecture complete and perfect so far as its purpose went. It was from the year 444 B.C. to 430,—the brilliant era of the accomplished Pericles,—that the chief architectural glories of Athens arose:—the Propyleum, the Parthenon, the Temple of Theseus, and the temples of Erechtheus and Minerva Polias.

I must remind you that the Greeks had three orders—the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian. These are all distinguishable at a glance, if by their capitals alone, and yet there are not merely ladies, but men, who can unblushingly admit that they do not know one from the other. The Doric capital, a square cap (called an abacus), and a rounded moulding under it, you may see in Fig. 15: of the other

capitals, I will give representations hereafter although you do not need them. In the Doric order, the triglyph is also a distinguishing characteristic: it is not used in any other. The most important modern example of this order in London is the entrance to the Euston Station of the North-Western Railway: but you will scarcely pass through a new square without finding a miniature imitation of it in a porch. In Edinburgh you have the unfinished Monument on the Calton Hill, to serve as an instance. Simplicity and grandeur, with great elegance of detail, are the characteristics of pure Doric architecture. The Ionic was lighter and more refined; the Corinthian more slender still, and more elaborately adorned. Thomson says, speaking of Greece, in his "Ode to Liberty":—

"In architecture, too, thy rank supreme:
That art where most magnificent appears.
The little builder man; by thee refined,
And smiling high, to full perfection brought.
Such thy sure rules, that Goths of every age,
Who scorn'd their aid, have only loaded earth
With labour'd heavy monuments of shame.
Not those gay domes that o'er thy splendid shore
Shot, all proportion, up. First, unadorn'd
And nobly plain, the manly Doric rose;
The Ionic then, with decent matron grace.
Her airy pillar heaved; luxuriant last,
The rich Corinthian spread her wanton wealth.
The whole so measured true, so lessen'd off
By fine proportion, that the marble pile
Form'd to repel the still or stormy waste
(Of rolling ages, light as fabrics look'd
That from the magic wand aerial rise."

The lines have been often quoted; but as they convey, in a form likely to be remembered, the sentiment of the three Orders, I have ventured to repeat them.

When the Parthenon was raised, the taste of the Athenian populace was cultivated to an extraordinary degree; and there is clear evidence that philosophy and art were studied by all, and contributed to the every-day enjoyments of the multitude. Desire for glory was the leading motive in the Athenian mind: to decorate their city, and render it the "Greece of Greece," as it has been termed, became a passion. Art can scarcely take a high place until the people themselves are prepared to

of a timber hut, by which they illustrate their views (Fig. 14); and if you compare it with Fig. 15, representing the end of a Grecian Doric temple, you will see how far the analogy holds. The end of the roof forms the pediment; the longitudinal beams, extending from column to column, make the architrave; the ends of the transverse beams are supposed to have suggested the ornament called a triglyph (from being sculptured with two whole and two half glyphs or channels), which is seen above the columns in the sketch; and the end of the inclined rafters of the roof originated another ornament above each triglyph, in the underside of the cornice, called a mutule. The whole of the construction above the column up to the edge of the roof, embracing architrave, frieze, and cornice, is called the entablature. Do not be alarmed. I shall not trouble you with much of this detail. What I am about to say is, that without denying the influence which timber constructions had upon Greek architecture, I cannot help believing that Greece was something indebted to Egypt in this respect, and to Assyria. We have seen the connection which existed between the Greeks and Egypt. Bulwer says, in his "Athens," that it was not earlier than 670 years B.C. when the Greeks were thrown into familiar intercourse with the arts and manners of Egypt. At that time, some Ionian and Carian adventurers were driven upon the Egyptian shore, and afterwards, with their swords, enabled Psammetichus to regain his dominions, and become sole sovereign of Egypt. In return, he gave them lands, and obliged some Egyptian children to learn Greek: from whom descended a class of interpreters who established familiar intercourse between the two countries.

If you refer back to Fig. 13,—the tomb at Benihasan, you will see a close similarity to the Doric of Greece in a structure considered to be many centuries older than any example in the latter country. Some Egyptian columns have a capital not far unlike the Doric capital. From Assyria we now see that the Greeks had, at all events, the ornament heretofore known

receive and appreciate it. If their knowledge of it be extended, and a love for it induced, its efforts will necessarily advance. When Aristotle said, incorrectly as a general rule, that the common people are the most exquisite judges of whatever is graceful or sublime in art, he spoke (observes Bulwer) from his knowledge of the Athenians, who were a special case. When this is really the fact (and to this end, if we wish to elevate the arts, our endeavours should tend), then of course mediocrity will cease to be applauded, and the

efforts of genius will be appreciated, and led into the right path.

Pericles has earned immortal honour by the assistance which he afforded to the fine arts; but the Athenian people are entitled to part of the glory which even the remnants of the magnificent structures then erected gain for their undying city—a glory which they foresaw and strove for. I say foresaw, because it is known that when Pericles, in reply to a complaint made by political opponents, that he had squandered the public money upon the

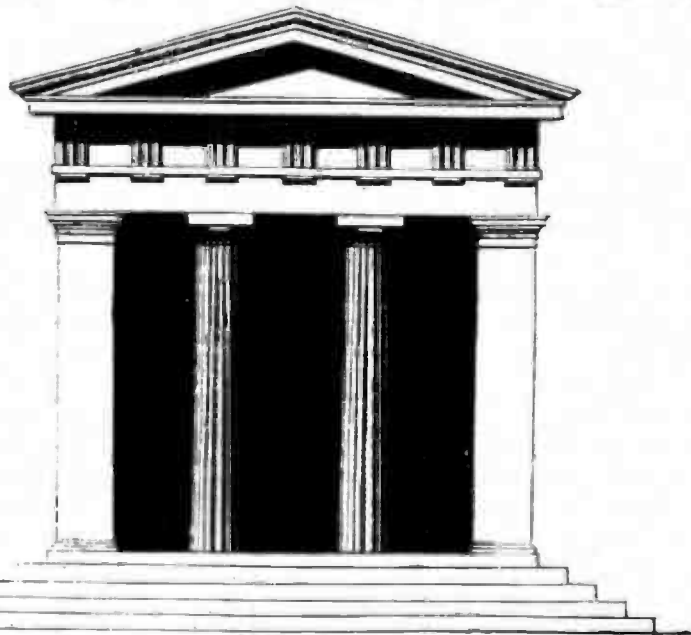


FIG. 15.—THE END OF A DORIC TEMPLE.